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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Third periodic reports of States parties due in 2013

Yemen*

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Third national report of the Republic of Yemen on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

I. Introduction

1. Since the presentation of its second periodic report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Republic of Yemen has witnessed numerous developments in the field of human rights. In particular, the peaceful popular revolution that broke out in early 2011 constituted a turning point in the history of Yemen and led to fundamental changes and events that directly affected the various components of the State and society in a number of ways, as a result of which Yemen adopted a more serious national approach to the promotion and protection of human rights.

2. A National Reconciliation Government was formed in December 2011 and presidential elections were held on 21 February 2012 after which a number of measures were taken to save Yemen from the risk of becoming a failed State. A Military Affairs Committee was formed to restore order and stability and Presidential Decree No. 140 of 2012 approved the establishment of an independent national commission to investigate the human rights violations that occurred in 2011. This commission is expected to begin exercising its functions as soon as its members have been designated. Other presidential decrees have also been issued to restructure the military and security establishment and set up committees for the settlement of the principal national controversies underlying the protests by the Southern (Separatist) Movement. To this end, it was decreed that two committees would be formed; a committee to examine and resolve land issues and a committee to address the issue of officials who had been dismissed from their posts in the civil, security and military sectors. With a view to promoting closer cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, Council of Ministers Decision No. 14 of 2012 authorized the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to open an office in Yemen. The final draft of the agreement for the opening of this office was prepared in collaboration with the OHCHR delegation and signed in New York on 25 September 2012.

3. The Yemeni Government has endeavoured to remedy the situation with which Yemen has been faced since the beginning of 2011 by formulating a Transitional Stability and Development Programme for the period 2012–2014 which was presented to the Donors' Conference held in Riyadh on 4 September 2012 and the Friends of Yemen Conference held in New York on 26 September 2012. This development plan for the transitional period was designed to restore political and economic stability and security and consolidate the structure of the State by prioritizing completion of the peaceful transfer of power, the restoration of political stability, the establishment of security, enforcement of the rule of law, reform of the judiciary, endeavours to combat corruption, greater national protection for human rights and public freedoms and measures to meet urgent humanitarian needs and achieve economic stability while, at the same time, taking into account the need to meet the needs of vulnerable groups as a primary requirement for the achievement of real stability through implementation of the 2012 Humanitarian Response Plan, provision of the requisite material support for the Plan, receipt of humanitarian aid and its delivery to the afflicted persons in need thereof.

4. With regard to promotion of the role of women and endeavours to achieve the maximum degree of equality in all fields, the National Women's Conference, which was attended by participants from all ideological and social groups, was held during the period

19–21 March 2012. The Conference's recommendations and demands, which echoed the aspirations of all Yemeni women, are currently being met, as illustrated by the fact that 30 per cent of the participants in the Comprehensive National Dialogue are women. The National Women's Committee is continuing its endeavours to promote women's rights in the national legislature in a manner consistent with the international treaties that our country has signed.

5. In response to the national need to promote and protect the rights and freedoms of all citizens of the Republic of Yemen, the First National Conference on Human Rights was held during the period 9–10 December 2012 as a token of the intensive efforts that the State and society are making to ensure the promotion and protection of, and respect for, human rights as an issue that will determine the positive or negative outcome of all attempts to resolve the problems impeding development, security and political, economic and social stability in view of their linkage to conflicts, injustice, persecution, repression and tyranny. The human person is the focal point and key element in this process. The Conference discussed a number of issues with a bearing on the principal civil rights of Yemeni society, including the development of its legal awareness, enhancement of the political rights of young adults, application of the concepts of gender equality and social responsibility, constitutional guarantees of the rights of minorities and marginalized groups, protection of human rights within the framework of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the national mechanisms to combat trafficking in persons, and efforts to promote wider public understanding of the concept of transitional justice which is the main item on the current national agenda. The national and international legal framework for asylum and the scope of the activities of civil society organizations were also discussed.

6. Presidential Decree No. 11 issued on 16 March 2013 established the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and designated its members, consisting of male and female citizens from all parts of Yemen working together to find solutions to the principal challenges facing the country. This Conference, which provides an opportunity for all citizens to hold purposeful and constructive discussions and participate in the formulation of a road map for Yemen, is run by Yemenis themselves with technical and material support from regional and international partners.

7. The Comprehensive National Dialogue constitutes the second phase of the two-year transitional process provided for in the Gulf Initiative as a means to put an end to the conflict through broad popular participation in such a way as to enable the Yemenis to build a just and prosperous country in which equality and stability will prevail. The time frame set in the Gulf Initiative for the official national dialogue process covered a six-month period beginning on 18 March 2013.

8. Yemen is currently passing through a difficult phase of political transition in which it is facing a humanitarian crisis brought about by higher prices of food and fuel, a rising poverty rate, a decline in the standard of social services, a scarcity of resources and internal conflicts.

9. The attempts to ensure political reform are making headway in the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference where they are being debated by 565 participants from all segments of society. The Conference intends to draft a new constitution and make preparations for presidential and parliamentary elections in February 2014.

10. The holding of presidential elections in February 2014 after the completion of the transitional phase will constitute the beginning of another historic stage in the new Yemen's path towards a better future and the establishment of a modern democratic State in which sound civil governance will be based on the principles of freedom, justice, equality and respect for human rights.

11. The Yemeni Government welcomes the positive observations made by the distinguished Committee in the light of the discussion of the second periodic report and, in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, has pleasure in submitting clarifications concerning the steps and measures taken to address the Committee's observations. Council of Ministers Decree No. 238 of 2011 concerning implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stipulated that the recommendations should be circulated to all government ministries and institutions so that they could be incorporated in the State's plans, programmes and general policies and the Ministry of Human Rights was assigned to follow up on their implementation.

12. To this end, the Ministry of Human Rights organized a number of meetings during which the recommendations were submitted to the members of the Technical Committee on Human Rights (a governmental entity consisting of representatives of a number of security, judicial and other official bodies concerned with human rights issues). Other meetings were held during which the Committee's recommendations were submitted to the members of the Advisory Body (a consultative entity consisting of around 60 members representing civil society organizations concerned with human rights issues) and to academics, activists, journalists and trade unionists with a view to achieving real progress in the adoption of practical steps and measures to implement the recommendations to which we will be referring in this third periodic report presented by the Republic of Yemen on the fulfilment of its obligations as a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Measures taken to prepare the report

13. The following measures were taken to prepare the report:

- By order of the Minister for Human Rights, a team of specialists was assigned to gather information and prepare the report;
- A number of letters were drafted and dispatched to the government bodies concerned, requesting them to provide information on the implementation of the recommendations, together with the data and statistics needed to prepare the report;
- Field visits to a number of government bodies were programmed for the purpose of gathering information;
- The report was prepared in accordance with three main criteria: the guidelines for the preparation of periodic reports to be submitted under the provisions of the Covenant, the Committee's recommendations made in the light of the discussion of Yemen's second periodic report, and the changes that have taken place in Yemen since 2011;
- The report was drafted on the basis of the information available to the Ministry of Human Rights and the information gathered, in partnership with civil society experts, from a number of government bodies;
- The report was posted on the website of the Ministry of Human Rights so that comments could be received from the public prior to its official publication;
- The draft report was circulated to the Technical Committee on Human Rights and the Advisory Body so that they could comment thereon;
- On 25 June 2013, the Ministry of Human Rights, with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme to support human rights during the transitional phase, organized a workshop for members of the Ministry's Technical Committee and Advisory Body and human rights coordinators in a number of Yemeni

governorates. The comments made by the workshop participants on the draft report were taken into account in the final version of the report which was officially published on the date set by the Committee.

II. Challenges

A. Data gathering process

14. Although we have presented some data and statistics in the report, it proved difficult to obtain accurate and reliable data and statistics precisely meeting the Committee's requirements for such information on a number of issues relating to the implementation of the Covenant. This difficulty was caused primarily by the following problems:

Lack of an efficient statistical system

15. There is no efficient system for the regular collection, from the government ministries and statistical offices concerned, of comprehensive statistical and other data on the extent of respect for human rights, including annual or periodic reports issued by government bodies and containing details of their activities and information on judicial and legal measures, legal petitions, bills of law tabled in Parliament or under study, other executive and administrative measures and legal studies and research.

The statistical system is general and not detailed

16. Under the current system, the official government statistics published by the Central Statistical Organization and in other government reports consist of general chapters and headings lacking the details required by international human rights treaty bodies.

Weakness of institutional capacities

17. Government institutions are notably lax in their filing, archiving and updating of information. This negligence frequently leads to loss of information, conflicting data and difficulty in obtaining factual details from various government bodies.

Inadequate training and lack of familiarity with human rights issues

18. When government institutions are requested to provide information and statistics relating to human rights concepts and issues, there is often confusion or misunderstanding on the part of the staff of those institutions, as is evident from their replies, due to their lack of familiarity with human rights concepts and issues.

The events that occurred in 2011

19. The events and disruptions of security that occurred during that year brought the work of most government institutions to a standstill and some of them were even pillaged and destroyed. There were also electric power cuts in most parts of the country, as a result of which the information gathering process was made difficult, if not impossible, during that period.

B. Difficulties impeding implementation of the Covenant

20. The numerous difficulties impeding implementation of the Covenant can be summarized as follows:

(a) Widespread poverty in the full sense of the term, particularly in rural areas and among women, is one of the issues that have had the most disastrous effect on human rights and freedoms. Poverty is also one of the structural problems hampering the process of development and innovation in the field of human rights since current efforts are focused on ensuring the minimum of rights and a decent life at a time when increasing demands are being made for qualitative improvement in public and private rights and freedoms;

(b) Yemen is suffering from an imbalance in its population distribution insofar as 68 per cent of the population is concentrated in the central mountainous region while around 13 per cent of the population live on the southern and eastern coasts, 12 per cent in the Tihama plain and 5 per cent on the desert plateau. This dispersal is reflected in the difficulty of supplying basic services, particularly through law courts and public prosecution facilities, in all the population agglomerations;

(c) The current training programmes designed to familiarize criminal investigation officers and the staff of correction facilities with the human rights set forth in international treaties are inadequate;

(d) There are insufficient statistics, information and studies on human rights;

(e) The national mechanisms for the protection of human rights are deficient;

(f) Due to widespread illiteracy, a large segment of society is unfamiliar with its rights and obligations;

(g) Firearms have proliferated and, given the feeble authority of the State, there is no understanding of the rule of law;

(h) There is widespread corruption and a lack of confidence in the judiciary, public prosecutors and the security agencies;

(i) Public order is being disrupted and there are increased threats of terrorism.

C. Measures to implement the recommendations

21. With regard to the fulfilment of Yemen's international obligations and voluntary commitments and implementation of the Committee's recommendation urging our country to establish an independent national human rights institution in compliance with the Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, we wish to refer to a number of measures that our country has taken. In accordance with Council of Ministers Decision No. 35 of 2012 concerning the drafting of a bill of law on the establishment of an independent national human rights commission, several measures were taken to ensure the establishment of an independent, impartial and objective institution to promote and protect human rights and propagate a deeper understanding of the rule of law. In fact, one of the principal goals set forth in the plan to enhance governmental performance consisted in the establishment of this independent national institution during the biennium 2012–2013 and the international community, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, affirmed that the Government would be provided with all the technical and material support needed for its establishment. To this end, the following measures were taken:

- A bill of law on the establishment of a national human rights commission was drawn up in collaboration with a number of civil society institutions, taking as guidelines the experiences of Arab States such as Morocco, Qatar and Jordan which had established such independent human rights institutions;

- A number of workshops were held in the capital and also in the governorates of Hudaydah, Aden, Hadramawt and Ta'izz to discuss the bill of law on the establishment of an independent national human rights commission;
- A workshop was held on 29 May 2013 for the members of the working group on independent commissions in the National Dialogue Conference for the purpose of discussing the bill of law on the independent national human rights commission;
- A workshop was held on 30 May 2013 for the members of the House of Representatives so that they could discuss the bill of law on the independent national human rights commission;
- The bill of law was then submitted to a number of civil society organizations and also to international organizations (the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Danish Institute for Human Rights);
- The bill of law was posted on websites so that the public could express its views and comment thereon;
- The Government, represented by the Ministry of Human Rights and the Ministry of Legal Affairs, received all the views and comments concerning the articles of the bill of law on the establishment of the independent national human rights commission and many of these views and comments were incorporated in the bill which will soon be brought before the Council of Ministers for adoption and referral to the House of Representatives with a view to the discussion and adoption of its final version which will then be submitted to the President of the Republic for promulgation in a presidential decree;
- A team of competent specialists was recently dispatched to the Republic of Tunisia to familiarize itself with, and benefit from, the latter's experience in the establishment of an independent human rights institution.

III. Status of the Covenant

Article 1
The right of self-determination, including the free determination of political status, the free pursuit of economic, social and cultural development and the free disposal of natural wealth and resources

22. In keeping with the provisions of this article of the Covenant, and in furtherance of the Yemeni people's struggles to enjoy social well-being, justice and equality under a political and socioeconomic system that respects the people's right to self-determination, all Yemenis without exception have an opportunity to participate fully in the work of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference through which, for the first time, groups which had always been excluded from the political process are participating fully in decision-making. By way of example, 50 per cent of the total number of participants in the Conference are from the south and 50 per cent from the north. Women constitute 30 per cent, and young persons 20 per cent, of the total membership of the Conference from both the north and south and the Conference participants reflect a broad sociopolitical spectrum of society. In addition to women, young independents and political parties, the Conference is also attended by representatives of the Southern (Separatist) Movement, civil society organizations, Houthis and large social groups, such as marginalized and displaced persons and Yemenis living abroad, who are included on the list promulgated by the President of the Republic.

23. All citizens have equal opportunities to participate in this dialogue through the community meetings, public forums, field visits and audiences organized by the Conference members in addition to the meetings held by local civil society organizations in all the governorates. They can also participate in, interact with and contribute to the success of the numerous dialogue camps that are organized in the administrative centres of the governorates and move from one district to another.

24. The issues discussed include "the question of the south", "the question of Sa'dah", "sound governance", "State-building", "transitional justice and national conciliation", "integrated development", "building the army and security forces", "independent commissions", "rights and freedoms" and other matters of national concern falling within the purview of the nine working groups. The conclusions of the Dialogue Conference will be drafted by constitutional lawyers and presented in the form of a draft new national constitution representing the social contract agreed upon by all. The draft constitution will be put to a public referendum so that the Yemenis as a whole will have the final word concerning this new social contract.

25. The issues under discussion in the Dialogue Conference are matters of high priority to all citizens since they reflect the main challenges facing Yemen at the present time. The Conference is endeavouring to establish constitutional and legal principles and criteria for the formulation of general policies in a manner conducive to national conciliation and transitional justice by determining the causes of issues of national concern and proposing constitutional, legal and political solutions and remedies therefor, as well as firm guarantees of the sustainability of such remedies. The questions of the south and the governorate of Sa'dah will also be discussed. The main topics to be addressed during the Conference, which will determine the future of the Yemeni people, are as follows:

State-building

26. The Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference is endeavouring to formulate basic constitutional principles and decide on the reforms needed in regard to the identity and form of the State, the system of governance, the electoral and administrative system and the mandates and functions of the legislative, judicial and executive authorities so that they can be incorporated in the country's future constitution.

Integrated, sustainable and comprehensive development

27. Comprehensive development constitutes the primary objective of the transformation process that is taking place in Yemen and on which the people are relying for fulfilment of their hopes and aspirations for a secure and prosperous future and a decent life for coming generations and establishment of the foundations of a strong State in which justice will prevail, human rights will be respected and all will be equal before the law. Although the working group on comprehensive development is only one of the working groups set up by the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, the tasks that have been assigned to it, in conjunction with the output of the other working groups, will map out the future to which all citizens of Yemen are aspiring.

Rights and freedoms

28. One of the Conference's nine working groups has been assigned to define public and private rights and freedoms in the future civil State by reviewing the chapter on rights and freedoms in the present Yemeni Constitution, comparing it with the rights and freedoms recognized in the constitutions of other States, examining international systems of rights and freedoms and the recommendations of conferences, symposiums and local workshops on rights and freedoms and implementing a number of measures and activities to receive proposals from citizens, political parties and civil society organizations concerning rights

and freedoms in order to determine the rights and freedoms to be guaranteed in the future constitution, including:

- Civil and political rights and freedoms;
- Economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms;
- Ideological and confessional rights and freedoms;
- The rights and freedoms of women, children and young persons;
- The rights and freedoms of marginalized persons, minorities and persons with special needs;
- The rights and freedoms of displaced persons, refugees and citizens living abroad.

Sound governance

29. In order to establish a constitutional and legal system that will ensure justice, equality and equal opportunities in the Republic of Yemen, a special working group is discussing mechanisms to combat corruption, apply answerability, accountability, transparency, justice, equality and equal opportunities, impose the rule of law, determine the principles of foreign policy and ensure a balance of power and responsibility.

Independent commissions

30. The aim of the working group on this topic is to determine the basic principles on which the independence of commissions of a special nature should be based and to formulate and harmonize policies to address social and environmental issues in such a way as to ensure the full independence of these commissions through the promulgation of constitutional provisions with legal, social and environmental dimensions.

Building the army and security forces

31. In addition to the measures taken since February 2012 to rebuild and restructure the army, the Conference is endeavouring to formulate constitutional provisions, laws and policies to rebuild national professional armed and security forces and intelligence agencies and address a number of issues including the reinstatement of all the southern military and security personnel forcibly dismissed and removed from their posts following the 1994 summer war, as well as all the military and security personnel victimized by being dismissed and removed from their posts following the hostilities in Sa'dah and the military and security personnel victimized by being dismissed and removed from their posts in other governorates of the Republic, and payment of fair compensation in respect of the detriment that they have suffered.

Article 2
Exercise of the rights enunciated in the Covenant without discrimination

32. In response to the Committee's request for detailed information on the ethnic composition of Yemeni society and, in particular, marginalized categories, we wish to inform the Committee that the *Akhdam* category is a marginalized group at the bottom of the Yemeni social structure. The vast majority of them are dark-skinned and live in social, economic, cultural and political isolation.

33. There are no precise statistics on the size of this group living in isolated poverty-stricken shanty towns on the outskirts of Yemeni cities where they erect shelters made from

debris, cardboard, sheet metal and empty cans (each room is occupied by 5–10 persons). The majority are found in the cities of Sana'a, Aden, Ta'izz, Hudaydah, Ibb, Dhamar, Lahij, Mukalla and Abyan. The areas in which these marginalized people are concentrated are not normally utilized for economic purposes and are possibly not utilizable for such purposes in the immediate future. They erect their huts on land that is usually either State property or of undetermined ownership and, in a few cases, with the provisional consent of the landowner who may oblige them to vacate the land. In view of the fact that Yemeni cities are now expanding rapidly and the State and individuals are eager to exploit land that was not previously utilized, many of the *Akhdam* settlements around cities are liable to be demolished, which is a fundamental cause of anxiety to these people who already have difficulty in procuring the basic necessities of life.

34. Their level of education is low and most of them work in socially disreputable trades and occupations (garbage collection – car washing – porterage – cobbling). This group, which carries no social weight and lacks political representation, obviously does not participate in public civil and political life and faces widespread social discrimination which is deeply rooted in local culture. Its members are also exposed to economic, social and political exploitation.

35. Since 2011, a number of changes have occurred in regard to this group's participation in public life. Its members took part in the protests that were held within the country and in which they demanded an end to society's disdainful attitude towards them. They were recently granted representation in the membership of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, which is regarded not only as a sign of progress in the process of breaking their isolation from participation in public life but also as a first step towards ending the discriminatory attitude that they have helped society to form, even though there are no provisions in the corpus of national legislation that entail discrimination against them and the State has not adopted any measures or procedures that imply any form of discrimination against them.

36. The President of the Yemeni Union of the Marginalized, who represents marginalized persons in the National Dialogue Conference, has submitted a document containing the following demands that these persons hope will be met in the new constitution:

- A commitment by the State to formulate plans and adopt equitable national policies that guarantee the right of marginalized persons to obtain adequate housing, basic services, education opportunities, free health care, employment opportunities and social protection and welfare in such a way as to ensure that everyone enjoys the intrinsic right to life and human dignity which all the State authorities should have a mandatory obligation to protect and respect;
- The constitution should prohibit and criminalize all forms of discrimination, slavery and servitude detrimental to individuals and groups belonging to racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the State should undertake to promulgate all the laws and legislation needed to this end in such a way as to ensure equality among all social groups;
- The constitution should guarantee the right of marginalized persons and minorities to participation and representation through the allocation of a 10 per cent quota of civil service posts, access to senior positions in the civil and military establishments and representation in elected legislative councils and bodies. The State should also undertake to promulgate the laws and legislation needed to that end in such a way as to ensure their participation in public civil and political life and their access to decision-making posts in all State institutions;

- The State should undertake to establish independent national bodies to protect the rights of groups belonging to racial, ethnic and religious minorities and should take all the legislative and legal measures needed to that end in a manner consistent with all the international covenants and treaties relating to the rights of minorities.

37. In fact, the State is taking the following measures to support and ensure the welfare of this category:

- It is encouraging the establishment of public and private associations, such as the National Union of the Most Poverty-Stricken Groups. A total of 55 public associations of this type have already been established and are receiving annual financial subsidies;
- Marginalized persons have been allocated 150 free places in Ta'izz University and 30 places in Sana'a University;
- Two hospitals in Sana'a are providing free services and surgical procedures;
- A total of 1,500 posts in the armed forces were allocated to this category in 2009 and 2010;
- A total of 47,000 households are benefiting from social security for marginalized persons;
- Ownership of homes in residential complexes in Sana'a and Ta'izz, in which electricity and water supply services are provided, has been transferred to marginalized groups and similar transfers of ownership are being completed in other residential complexes in Sana'a, Ta'izz, Aden and Hudaydah.

38. With regard to the Committee's recommendation to take urgent and effective measures to put an end to discrimination in the public sector against persons from the southern regions of Yemen, we wish to point out that, as already noted in this report, the far-reaching changes that have taken place in Yemen have had an impact on a number of national issues, including the question of the southern Yemenis and the protests in which they have voiced several grievances since the unification of Yemen in 1990. Following the outbreak of the peaceful popular youth revolution, there was a shift towards the establishment of a modern civil Yemeni State and resolution of all the national issues. The measures taken to address these issues included the settlement of complaints filed by southerners and, in this regard, a presidential decree called for the establishment of two committees (a committee to examine and resolve land issues and a committee to address the issue of officials who had been dismissed from their posts in the civil, security and military sectors). These two committees were mandated to hear cases involving encroachments on public and private property and land and violations of the rights of southerners working in the civil, security and military sectors since the unification of northern and southern Yemen in 1990. The committees are currently studying the files received prior to the deadline for the filing of complaints so that they can subsequently settle these complaints and redress any injustice suffered by the complainants.

Welfare of persons with disabilities

39. The Committee recommended that measures be taken to ensure that persons with disabilities were not subjected to discrimination or stigmatization in any walks of life. It should be noted that the endeavours being made to implement this recommendation include the Yemeni Government's decision to designate a Day of Persons with Disabilities which will take the form of a public celebration and review of the achievements of the past year and the expected achievements in the coming year in the light of the need to discuss issues affecting persons with disabilities in a transparent manner with a view to conducting an in-depth examination of their positive aspects and identifying their negative aspects so that

proposals can be made to overcome the latter to the maximum possible extent. The State's development plans also show concern for persons with disabilities, as illustrated by the implementation of the following measures:

- Expansion of the rehabilitation and training programmes for children with disabilities;
- Promotion of health care and eradication of illiteracy among persons with disabilities;
- Formulation of a comprehensive policy on children with disabilities and review of their situation in regard to employment opportunities, accommodation and health care;
- Establishment of more social care centres for persons with disabilities and endeavours to meet the needs and requirements of these centres in order to improve their services;
- Provision of the qualified staff needed to train the personnel of social care centres;
- Improvement of personnel training programmes in centres for persons with special needs and provision of a full range of services to ensure their social integration;
- Expansion of soft loan programmes to enable needy households to establish small income-generating enterprises.

Services of the Care and Rehabilitation Fund for Persons with Disabilities

40. The establishment of the Care and Rehabilitation Fund for Persons with Disabilities was a sign of tangible progress in the care and rehabilitation of these categories since it guaranteed their enjoyment of all their rights in order to enable them to lead their lives in a manner consistent with human dignity in their capacity as citizens vested with rights and obligations like any other members of society. The Fund also provides care and rehabilitation services for children with disabilities.

(a) At the individual level

41. The principal fields in which these services are provided are:

- Health services: these include minor and major surgical procedures in all fields of specialization such as correction of bone and spinal malformation; correction of vision; corneal transplantation; cataract removal; cosmetic surgery; dispensing of pharmaceuticals; physiotherapy (especially for children afflicted with cerebral palsy); dentistry; brain and neurosurgery; and various types of diagnostic examinations;
- Financial and in-kind services and assistance: these include the provision of assistive medical and mobility devices and requisites, such as various types of wheelchairs; hearing aids for the hearing impaired; corrective lenses for the visually impaired; white canes, talking watches and Braille touch watches for the blind; crutches and walkers; medical bedding and pillows; medical belts and shoes; prostheses; cerebral shunts; and therapeutic assistance abroad;
- Education and training services: contributions are made to the payment of tuition fees at the various stages of education (kindergarten, basic and secondary education, university and higher studies, short, intermediate and long training courses) as well as educational aids such as curricula, tape recorders, talking Korans, Braille Korans, Perkins printers, Braille tablets, pens and paper, curricula recorded on cassette tapes,

talking computer programmes, mental education and training, printing of curricula and speech training for the hearing impaired.

(b) At the institutional level

42. Funding is provided to meet the requirements of the educational, vocational training, social, cultural and recreational projects of government centres and centres run by civil society organizations engaged in the care and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, including:

- Costs of basic and secondary education;
- Costs of educational programmes to facilitate integration in government schools;
- Costs of education for persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities;
- Provision of educational aids and curricula for blind persons and persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities;
- Funding the organization of camps and special weeks for extracurricular cultural, social, recreational, sports and other events and activities;
- Funding the organization of festivals and celebrations to mark the end of the academic year;
- Funding of early intervention programmes;
- Provision of sports equipment for the various categories of persons with disabilities;
- Provision of musical instruments and equipment;
- Provision of tools and equipment for vocational training;
- Provision of monthly stipends for teachers and instructors providing vocational training and support services;
- Provision of vehicles to transport students from their homes to the training centres and vice versa;
- Provision of fuel and lubricants for training centres possessing means of transport;
- Meeting the maintenance costs of machines, equipment and appliances;
- Provision of stationery and cleaning equipment;
- Provision of school furniture and educational material for the training centres;
- Meeting the monthly rental costs of the training centres.

(c) Local community-based rehabilitation programmes

43. Community-based rehabilitation programmes are being implemented in six governorates for persons afflicted with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, cerebral palsy, motor disabilities, hearing impairments, deafness, visual impairments, epileptic seizures and certain health problems. The activities of these community-based rehabilitation programmes focus on:

- Training disabled children in their own homes in order to develop their capacities and teach them to become self-reliant in the performance of daily activities. Their families are visited and advised on ways to cope with their disabled children;
- Integration of disabled children in schools and monitoring of their progress;

- Transfer of those over 18 years of age to training centres for the acquisition of occupational skills;
- Enabling children with disabilities or special needs to obtain social security benefits from the Fund for Persons with Disabilities;
- Encouraging the local community to play a greater role through the holding of motivational symposiums to ensure that guardians and the bodies concerned make an active contribution to the care of children with disabilities;
- Referral of numerous disabled children to health centres and hospitals for provision of the requisite treatment;
- Distribution of assistive devices, such as carriages, by the Fund for Persons with Disabilities in the governorate of Abyan;
- Organization of activities, such as painting, singing, handicrafts and cultural competitions, for children.

Article 3
Ensuring the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant

National legislation to ensure gender equality

44. The Yemeni Government has continued its endeavours to eliminate discrimination against women in regard to the achievement of equality under the national laws through constitutional, legal and other means. In fact, the Constitution emphasizes that there should be no gender discrimination in regard to rights, obligations and participation in any economic, social or cultural activities. The Government has taken several measures to put an end to discrimination against women through amendments to the texts of a number of laws in force or the addition of provisions to guarantee women's rights in the public, social, private, family and other spheres, as illustrated by the changes that have been made to the labour, social security, nationality and diplomatic service regulations. (For further information on legislative measures, reference can be made to Yemen's eighth report submitted in May 2013 under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.)

Empowerment of women

Policies, programmes and strategies to promote gender equality and empowerment of women

45. Yemen has pursued a clearly defined policy on gender issues. It has adopted a national strategy for the advancement of women (2006–2015), drawn up by the National Women's Committee in collaboration with the bodies concerned by which it is currently being implemented, and a strategy for the advancement of working women (2003–2011). A strategy to promote various women's issues is also being drawn up by the Yemeni Women's Union for the period 2012–2015.

Ways in which the issues of gender equality and empowerment of women have been addressed within the context of national development during the last five years

46. With a view to ensuring increased participation by women in the formal and informal economic sectors, a strategy for the advancement of working women (2003–2011) was drawn up and a female component was incorporated in the Third Five-Year Plan

(2006–2010) in order to promote greater participation by women in the development process, in decision-making positions and in economic life. Although the Government has decided to appoint female teachers and incorporate the gender factor in the State's general budget, these decisions have not yet been implemented to the extent required.

Improvement in the gathering, publication and use of data disaggregated by age and sex

47. To this end, a database has been established and is currently being updated. The Prime Minister has also issued a circular calling for the establishment of databases disaggregated by sex in government bodies and institutions and on the website of the National Women's Committee.

Collection and analysis of data on the socioeconomic situation of women

48. Data on the socioeconomic situation of women is being gathered and analysed within the framework of the plans of action of the National Women's Committee, the Yemeni Women's Union and other stakeholders.

Meeting the demands of women for an improvement in their situation in rural areas

49. In this connection, a number of strategies have been adopted including, in particular:

- A strategy for the advancement of rural women;
- A strategy for the agricultural sector during the period 2011–2015.

Involvement of men and children in the shouldering of responsibilities for childcare etc. in furtherance of the endeavours to ensure gender equality

50. The endeavours made in this regard are illustrated by:

- Implementation of programmes to raise awareness of the social roles of men and women;
- A campaign to make the public more familiar with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Other issues

51. In addition to the above, the following measures have also been taken:

- Incorporation of the gender factor in the manual for the preparation of the Fourth Five-Year Plan;
- Incorporation of the gender factor in the manual for the preparation of the State's public budgets.

Participation of women in decision-making positions and in public life

52. With regard to the Committee's recommendations concerning the promulgation of comprehensive legislation governing gender equality and the application of special provisional measures, including a quota system to increase women's representation in decision-making positions in all spheres, it should be noted that women's participation in decision-making remains modest at all levels.

53. However, the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women and the incorporation of a female component in the Third Five-Year Plan (2006–2010) helped to increase women's representation in the political process and in public life and numerous symposiums, workshops, studies, legislative amendments and meetings with decision

makers have been organized to that end. Finally, women obtained a quota of 30 per cent of the membership of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference which will be addressing the various political, social and economic issues that Yemen has been facing since the changes that took place in 2011.

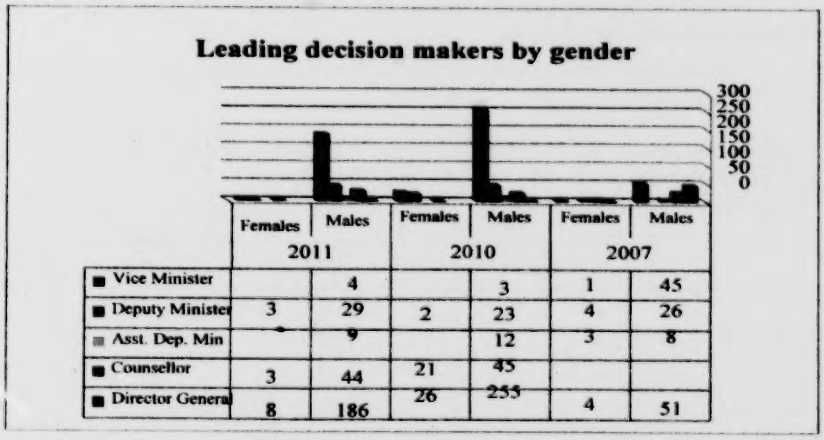
54. The statistics in the following table show the low proportion of women holding decision-making positions in government institutions. This is attributable to the lack of clearly defined criteria for recruitment and the administrative corruption that has been highly instrumental in blocking the appointment of qualified staff, both male and female, in decision-making positions.

Number of women in decision-making positions in the years 2007, 2010 and 2011

	2007			*2010*			*2011*		
Functional position	*Males*	*Females*	*Percentage of females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Percentage of females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Percentage of females*
Vice-Minister	45	1	2.1	3	-	-	4	-	-
Deputy Minister	26	4	13.3	23	2	8.0	29	3	9.3
Assistant Deputy Minister	8	3	27.2	12	-	-	9	-	-
Counsellor	No data	No data	-	45	21	31.8	44	3	6.3
Director General	51	4	7.27	255	26	9.25	186	8	4.12

Source: Council of Ministers & Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Percentage of women in decision-making positions in government institutions



Source: Eighth report to CEDAW, 2013.

Decisions taken in 2012 concerning political participation by women

55. The following decisions concerning political participation by women were taken in 2012:

(a) The National Reconciliation Government: this Government consists of 35 ministers, including 3 female ministers (Minister for Human Rights, Minister for Social

Affairs and Labour and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs). The percentage of women in the Government therefore amounts to 9 per cent. Although the ministries run by women are not of a sovereign or revenue-generating nature and act primarily as providers of social services, this constitutes a commendable step forward in the endeavours to ensure the empowerment of women in decision-making positions;

(b) The Presidential Liaison Committee: Presidential Decree No. 13 of 2012 established this Committee to liaise with the parties participating in the National Dialogue Conference. The Committee consists of eight members, including two women who thereby constitute 25 per cent of its membership;

(c) The Technical Preparatory Committee for the National Dialogue Conference: Presidential Decree No. 30 of 2012 established this Committee consisting of 29 members, 17 per cent of whom are women, to make preparations for the National Dialogue Conference. The Committee decided that female representation should amount to not less than 30 per cent in all the components of the National Dialogue;

(d) Appointment of a female adviser to the President of the Republic: Presidential Decree No. 55 of 2012 appointed a woman as Presidential Adviser on Women's Affairs. This Decree was unprecedented in the history of Yemen;

(e) The High Electoral Commission: Presidential Decree No. 63 of 2012 appointed two female judges among the members of the High Electoral Commission consisting of nine judges. Women therefore constitute 22 per cent of its membership. This represents a considerable achievement that must be credited to the struggle that Yemeni women, led by the National Women's Committee, have waged to ensure their participation in political life and decision-making. It is a well-deserved, albeit modest, recognition of the leading role that Yemeni women played and the tremendous sacrifices that they made, to the world's amazement, in the public demonstrations that brought about change.

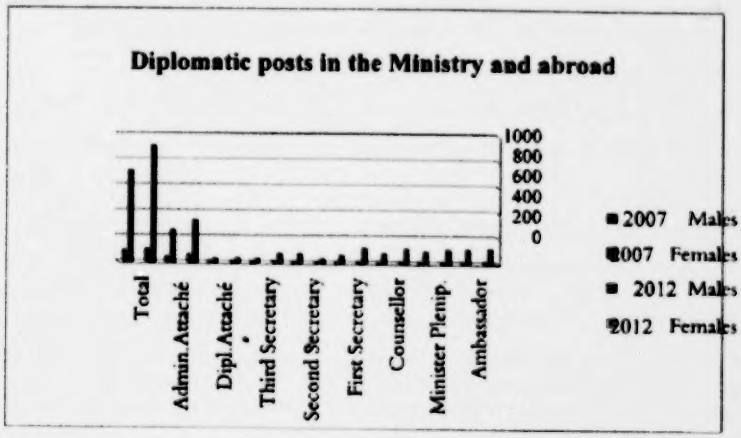
Women in the Diplomatic Service

56. Women occupy only a small percentage of diplomatic posts, as is clearly evident from the following table:

Number of males and females occupying diplomatic posts, according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs records for the years 2007 and 2012

	2007				*2012*			
Grade	*Males*	*Females*	*Female %*	***Total***	*Males*	*Females*	*Female %*	***Total***
Ambassador	116	2	1.7	**118**	110	3	2.7	**113**
Minister Plenipotentiary	106	3	2.8	**109**	91	9	9	**100**
Counsellor	112	9	7.4	**121**	75	6	7.4	**81**
First Secretary	115	9	7.3	**124**	60	5	7.7	**65**
Second Secretary	27	2	6.9	**29**	71	11	13.4	**82**
Third Secretary	73	11	13.1	**84**	29	11	27.5	**40**
Diplomatic Attaché	33	6	15.4	**39**	28	5	15	**33**
Administrative Attaché	332	59	15.1	**391**	253	45	15	**298**
Total	**914**	**101**		**1 015**	**717**	**95**		**812**

Gender gap in diplomatic posts



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012.

57. The above table shows that, in 2007, the total number of males amounted to 914 as compared with a total of 101 females who occupied around 10 per cent of the diplomatic posts and, in 2012, this figure rose to only 11.9 per cent in spite of the decline in the number of male and female staff in the Diplomatic Service. (For further information, reference can be made to Yemen's eighth report submitted in May 2013 under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.)

Support by international organizations for gender equality and empowerment of women during the last five years

58. Numerous international organizations and donor countries are acting in partnership, particularly with the Yemeni Women's Union and the National Women's Committee, to promote gender equality. Cooperation and support have been received from the following organizations and donor countries:

- UN-Women: studies and research;
- Oxfam: gender balance project;
- UNFPA: capacity-building and studies project in the field of gender equality;
- Netherlands Government: project to build the institutional capacities of the Yemeni Women's Union and technical advisory project to enhance the capacities of the Yemeni Women's Union;
- Japan Social Development Fund: project to support the neediest categories (women and youth);
- British Embassy: project on women's rights in Islam;
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID): basic health services project and project to raise awareness of the safe age for marriage;

- UNICEF: project on violence against women (Regional Conference on Domestic Violence), young women's education project, project on the prevention of violence against children, and project on the renunciation of female genital mutilation;
- AGFUND: Arab Gulf programme to support civil society organizations;
- UNDP: project for the legal and social protection of women;
- European Union: reproductive health project and women's empowerment for peace project.

Challenges impeding the advancement of women

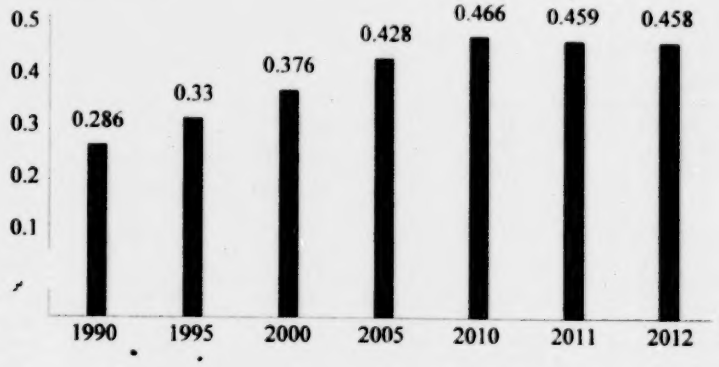
59. In spite of the endeavours that Yemen is making to ensure the advancement of women, and notwithstanding the progress that has so far been achieved, endeavours to mainstream gender equality are still facing numerous challenges including, in particular:

- In the political sector: inadequate quantitative and qualitative representation of women in decision-making positions and in elected and non-elected bodies due to the relative unwillingness of decision makers and political parties to increase female representation;
- In the economic sector: the poverty and economic dependence of women and their low rate of participation in the management of economic and environmental resources;
- In the health sector: inequality in the receipt of health care and services and lack of incentives and safeguards for the employment of women in this sector;
- In the education sector: the high rate of illiteracy among women and girls and the wide gender gap at all stages and in all fields of education;
- Ongoing violence against women and lack of respect for their recognized human rights;
- Failure to allocate financial resources, inefficiency and incompetence in meeting the requirements of gender equality and the low degree of male comprehension concerning the empowerment of women.

Article 6
Right to work

60. Given the fact that human beings are the real and most important resource for social progress, they should be the goal and focal point and, at the same time, the means of human development, which is dependent on two fundamental factors: the formation and diversification of human capacities and the utilization of these capacities in economic, political, social and cultural activities. Human development policies that do not succeed in striking a balance between these two factors are doomed to failure, as happened in Yemen where economic growth failed to create sufficient lucrative employment opportunities for the unemployed and for new entrants into the labour market. As a result, Yemen's economic growth was characterized as "non-job-creating" and this became clearly evident in the demonstrations by unemployed youth demanding the provision of employment opportunities and an end to the unemployment that was one of the main reasons for the outbreak in early 2011 of the revolution in Yemen which became a peaceful popular revolution for change in all the prevailing policies and systems that were leading Yemen in the wrong direction.

Indicator of the evolution in human development in Yemen during the period 1990–2012



Source: Statistical Yearbook, 2011.

Labour force size and trends

61. The labour market in Yemen is characterized by the magnitude of its informal sector since a large proportion of employers and workers are working for their own account in the agricultural, commercial and services sectors. The sectoral distribution of the labour force in 2010 shows that agricultural and fishing activities accounted for about 30 per cent of the total number of workers and traditional activities still constituted the primary source of employment.

62. The private sector is the main employer of the labour force in Yemen. The relative importance of the government sector as a means to absorb jobseekers increased during the period 1990–2000 but its role declined in subsequent years due to the comprehensive reform programme that was implemented by successive Yemeni Governments in agreement with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

63. Remittances from migrant workers are highly instrumental in promoting human development through the provision of supplementary sources of income for the migrants' families and households, thereby alleviating poverty, helping to meet education and health expenses and creating new employment opportunities by facilitating the financing of small enterprises. They constitute a major source of foreign exchange and help to reduce the current account deficit in the balance of payments.

64. The labour markets in the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council provide a variety of employment opportunities for the absorption of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled Yemeni workers for numerous reasons. There is a widespread misconception that the Gulf labour market requires only technically skilled and academically highly qualified labour. However, the sponsorship system imposes considerable constraints on the mobility of Yemeni labour and on the possibility of transfer from one occupation to another in the light of the job opportunities available in the market, as a result of which there is a significant risk of workers being exposed to exploitation, violation of their rights and profiteering at the expense of their interests. Since the future of such workers depends on the goodwill of their sponsors, they can be subjected to blackmail without the least degree of legal or moral protection.

Labour force and unemployment rate during the period 2004–2010

Data & indicators	Sex	2004 census (1)	2010 child labour survey (3)	Change during 2004–2010 Number (4)=(3)-(1)	Change during 2004–2010 Percentage (5)=(4)÷(1) x100
1 Total labour force (employed + unemployed)	Males	3 729 448	4 430 049	700 601	18.8
	Females	514 952	641 940	126 988	24.7
	Total	**4 244 400**	**5 071 989**	**827 589**	**19.5**
2 Total employed persons (not including unremunerated workers)	Males	3 244 390	3 880 094	635 704	19.6
	Females	310 971	291 305	- 19 666	- 6.3
	Total	**3 555 360**	**4 171 399**	**616 039**	**17.3**
3 Total unemployed persons	Males	485 058	549 955	64 897	13.4
	Females	203 981	350 635	146 654	71.9
	Total	**689 039**	**900 590**	**211 551**	**30.7**
4 Unemployment rate (3) ÷ (1) x 100	Males	13.0%	12.4%		- 4.6
	Females	39.6%	54.6%		37.9
	Total	**16.2%**	**17.8%**		**9.4**

Source: Statistical Yearbook, 2011.

Population growth and youth unemployment

65. In spite of expectations of a decline in the average annual population growth rate from the current 3.02 per cent to 2.09 per cent in 2025, the doubling time, i.e. the period of time needed for the population size to double, is 23.3 years. The fact that the younger (under 15 years of age) segments of the population numbered around 9.8 million in 2010 and constituted 42.4 per cent of the total population indicates that there is little likelihood of the high population growth rates being curbed in the short term since the country is suffering from a surge in the number of young persons which is a demographic phenomenon found in many developing countries seeking to reduce fertility and infant mortality rates.

66. The problem of unemployment is posing a serious challenge to the development process in Yemen. The unemployment rate amounts to 52.9 per cent in the younger age groups (15–24 years) and 44.4 per cent in the older age groups (25–59 years). According to the latest child labour survey, in 2011 the number of unemployed persons rose from 689,000 to 900,000, implying an increase of 17.8 per cent in the unemployment rate, since many enterprises went out of business, dismissed a large proportion of their employees or paid lower salaries for shorter working hours.

67. The employment prospects for Yemen's youth are very limited. Since there are no precise and reliable data on youth unemployment in Yemen, the unemployment rates generally suffer from contradictions and lack of accuracy. While some sources estimate youth unemployment at around 25 per cent, other sources place it at around 50 per cent with evident differences between males and females. The fact that the ages of a quarter of Yemen's population range from 10 to 19 years suggests that the youth unemployment crisis might be further aggravated in the medium term and, since 46 per cent of the population are under 16 years of age, the long-term picture looks equally bleak and the surge in the number of young persons, in conjunction with the increase in unemployment, could

destabilize the country. Hence, the Government will be required to make substantial investments in the field of youth development and involve Yemen's youth in civil life in order to guarantee a secure and promising future for them. The country will also need more regional employment opportunities, particularly in the Gulf where there is a large labour market, but must first provide better education.

Reduction of unemployment and provision of job opportunities

68. In this connection, it should be noted that the Government has taken a number of measures to address the high unemployment figures and provide job opportunities in accordance with the Committee's recommendation that Yemen take the necessary steps through, inter alia, its new national employment strategy, in order to reduce unemployment. In its Decision No. 94 of 2011, the Council of Ministers approved the implementing mechanism for the absorption, in 2011, of 25 per cent of the total number of registered jobseekers holding various levels of university degrees and technological, technical and vocational diplomas who had applied for civil service employment before the end of 2010.

69. With regard to designation of the 25 per cent of registered job applicants meriting employment, the Decision specified the basic preferential criteria as being seniority in terms of date of graduation and the requirement to select 25 per cent from each field of specialization and from each governorate and district constituting their permanent place of residence. The basic rule governing the assignment of the successful applicants was that they should be distributed among the State's administrative units or, if they so requested, assigned to the public and mixed sectors.

70. In April 2011, the Ministry of Civil Service applied the automated procedures for the selection of the registered job applicants meriting employment in accordance with the above-mentioned preferential criteria. Following the announcement of their names, the successful candidates were required to present themselves at the offices of the Ministry of Civil Service in the capital and the governorates in which they had applied in order to complete all the documentary and statutory procedures for their recruitment and assignment.

71. The Transitional Stability and Development Programme designed to put an end to unemployment contains numerous policies and programmes of action which focus on the following priorities with a view to the development of human resources and the creation of employment opportunities for youth:

- Allocation of some of the pledged resources to labour-intensive projects through the Social Development Fund and the Public Works Project;
- Implementation of a labour force survey;
- Stimulation of economic growth to put an end to unemployment through a package of comprehensive policies and programmes to create a favourable environment for growth in the production sectors;
- Enhancement of the performance of employment offices, establishment of a national employment agency and development of a labour market database;
- Replacement of foreign labour by Yemeni labour and establishment of a minimum wage in the private sector;
- Reopening of educational institutions in areas that have been scenes of conflict;
- Improvement of the practical effectiveness of technical and vocational education programmes and curricula in a manner consistent with the needs of the local and regional labour markets;

- Development of small and microenterprises in view of their significant effect in reducing poverty and unemployment;
- Rehabilitation of industrial zones;
- Provision of sufficient numbers of female teachers in rural areas;
- Organization of short training courses for unemployed and marginalized persons and dropouts from general education;
- Promotion of private-sector investments in technical and vocational education;
- Implementation of an employment strategy to put an end to youth unemployment, increase investment, boost production and create job opportunities for youth;
- Allocation of part of the petroleum revenues to promote youth employment through the Social Development Fund and the Public Works Project;
- Activation of the plan for the implementation of the National Strategy on Children and Youth;
- Creation of functional job opportunities for youth in the various sectors;
- Encouragement of banks and private financial institutions, and particularly the Amal Bank, to fund small enterprises through interest-free loans guaranteed by the Government;
- Promotion of partnership between universities and the private sector in the formulation of training programmes for youth with a view to the latter's integration in labour markets;
- Encouragement of the private sector to invest in youth capacity-building projects;
- Formation of a joint Government/private-sector working group to identify the needs of, and the obstacles impeding entry into, labour markets in the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council;
- Encouragement of local and foreign investments in tourism.

72. The National Reconciliation Government is aware of the danger of a further deterioration in the unemployment situation, particularly among youth, and has therefore placed youth issues on its list of priorities. These include the provision of economic opportunities for youth in order to enable them to enjoy an adequate standard of living, implementation of the employment strategy to put an end to youth unemployment, an increase in investment and endeavours to boost production and create employment opportunities for youth. The Government also intends to allocate part of its petroleum revenues to promote youth employment through investment in the Social Development Fund and the Public Works Project. At the same time, banks and private financial institutions, and particularly the Amal Bank, should be encouraged to fund small enterprises through interest-free loans guaranteed by the Government. Other measures that the Government intends to take in this regard include the mobilization of regional and international endeavours to train and develop the capacities of youth with a view to their integration in labour markets and the replacement of foreign labour by specialized Yemeni labour.

73. With regard to the Committee's recommendations concerning employment of the most deprived and marginalized individuals and groups, including women in rural and remote areas, and the need to combat employment-related discrimination against disabled women and girls and to ensure equal pay for men and women, it should be noted that the rate of female participation in the Yemeni labour force is among the lowest. Although the rate for women in the over-15 age group rose from 17.2 per cent in 2000 to 19.5 per cent in

2008, there is a large disparity in this indicator between males and females since, in 2004, the participation rate for females amounted to about 9.6 per cent as compared with 68.4 per cent for males and, in 2010, it amounted to 9.7 per cent for females and 72.9 per cent for males (Central Statistical Organization, Statistical Yearbook, 2010). The data also show that participation by female workers in the non-agricultural sector remained very low in comparison with the progress achieved in the education sector insofar as the female share of paid jobs in the non-agricultural sector ranged from 6 to 10 per cent during the period 1999–2009. In this regard, we refer the Committee to Yemen's eighth report, submitted in May 2013, under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Technical and vocational education

74. The importance of technical education and vocational training lies in the pivotal role that they play in socioeconomic life as one of the main tools for the training of skilled human resources and the alleviation of poverty. They also have a major impact on variables such as unemployment rates, personal income and the standard of living of citizens. This type of education is well suited to the nature of the employment opportunities generated by the various economic sectors that are adapting to the rapid technological changes and the information revolution and it is therefore consistent with the needs of the labour market. It is also in keeping with the principles underlying the National Strategy for Technical Education and Vocational Training during the period 2005–2014 which aims to absorb 15 per cent of the output from the basic and secondary stages of education after the existing educational institutions and facilities have been adapted, expanded, equipped and staffed with qualified teachers since it is firmly believed that investment in human resources is an appropriate means to achieve social progress. In view of the fact that technical education and vocational training undeniably constitute one of the linchpins for the development of the country's skilled and semi-skilled labour forces, the scope of educational and training programmes is being expanded in all the technical and vocational education centres and institutes. The following two paragraphs give details of the relevant statistical data and indicators in this regard.

75. The State and its political leadership are showing great concern for technical education and vocational training. New training facilities have been opened in all the governorates by the Ministry of Technical Education which, in 2003, was operating 54 such facilities throughout the Republic. In 2013, the number of vocational and technical training centres and institutes rose to 89, with a further 76 educational institutions under construction and needing equipment and 147 institutions planned and requiring funding and equipment.

76. The number of persons enrolled for technical education and vocational training increased from 12,482 male and female students in 2002/03 to 20,876, of whom 2,420 (11.6 per cent) were female, in the academic year 2009/10. The number of persons enrolled in the community colleges in Sana'a, Aden and Abs in 2002/03 amounted to 1,216 students, of whom 248 were female, as compared with the total number of 4,940 students, including 1,031 females, who were enrolled in the community colleges in the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Hajjah/Abs, Hadramawt/Seiyun and Ibb in 2009/10. This increase in enrolment was attributable to the opening of a number of new institutes, community colleges, academies and specialized private colleges (according to the statistics, the Ministry had granted licenses to 227 specialized centres and institutes run by the private sector) and there was a similar increase in admission to the Government-run health institutes and community colleges.

Low level of female representation

77. The low level of female representation in both vocational and technical education reflects a gender imbalance that necessitates further endeavours to overcome the social obstacles impeding more extensive integration of women in this type of education. There is also a need to expand educational coverage of electronic engineering, information and communications technology, computer science and other modern fields of specialization required by the labour market and to address the phenomenon of insufficient participation by women in comprehensive development in accordance with the prevailing values and culture. The imbalance in this regard is attributable to:

- The survival of some sociocultural phenomena in the light of which precedence is accorded to males at the expense of females;
- The commonly held belief that the function of young women is to provide assistance in agricultural work and household domestic tasks;
- The widespread illiteracy among women and the low level of awareness of the importance of girls' education;
- Household poverty, high dependency rates and inability to meet the education expenses of all the children.

78. Technical education and vocational training are basic components of comprehensive development, particularly in view of their role in the development of human resources and skills. There is an inverse correlation between the output of technical education and vocational training, on the one hand, and poverty and unemployment on the other since technical education and vocational training preclude affliction with poverty and unemployment and improve living conditions. Poverty and unemployment are alien to a skilled and trained worker.

79. A partial or total lack of skills leads to a lack of employment opportunities and/or low productivity which, in turn, lead to a low salary or no salary at all and, consequently, higher rates of poverty and/or unemployment.

80. In the light of the above, it can be said that the future success of Yemen's endeavours to reduce poverty and unemployment and combat terrorism and crime will depend largely on an improvement in the standard of technical education and vocational training and ease of access thereto, which will necessitate an inversion of the post-primary education pyramid so that technical education and vocational training will form the base of the pyramid.

Completion status of technical education and vocational training institutes and colleges

		Training institutions 2005		*Training institutions planned*		*Community colleges planned*	*Training institutions in operation 2006–2011*		*Training institutions under construction and needing equipment*			*Training institutions needing funding and equipment*		
	Governorate	*Vocational*	*Technical*	*Vocational*	*Technical*	*Community colleges*	*Vocational and technical*	*Community colleges*	*Vocational*	*Technical*	*Community colleges*	*Vocational*	*Technical*	*Community colleges*
1	Capital	2	6	14	7	1	10		2	3		8	2	1
2	Ibb	5	1	17	8	1	9	1	3	1	1	12	6	
3	Abyan	3	1	3	2	1	5		3	1	1			
4	Ta'izz	4	3	19	14	1	13	1	2	2	1	17	11	
5	Hajjah	2	2	7	4	1	4	1	4	2		3		
6	Hadramawt	2	2	6	3	3	4	2	2	2	1	4	1	1
7	Dhamar	1	1	9	4	1	4		4		1	5	2	
8	Aden	4	6	4	4	1	9	1		2		5	3	
9	Lahij	1	1	6	5	1	2		3		1	3	5	
10	Mahwit	1		4	2	1	1	1	1	1		3	1	1
11	Raima	1		2		1	1		1			1		1
12	Amran	2		8	6	1	3	1	2		1	5	6	
13	Hudaydah	5		11	6	1	6		3	2		8	4	1
14	Ma'rib	1		2	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	
15	Dali'	1		4	2	1	2		2			2	2	1
16	Shabwah			2	2	1	-		1			1	2	1
17	Bayda			4	2	1	2		3	1	1	1	1	
18	Sa'dah			3	2	1	1		2		1	1	2	
19	Jawf			3	2	1	-		2			1	2	1
20	Mahrah			1		1	1		1					1
21	Sana'a		1	8	6	1	1	2	5		1	2	4	
	Total	**35**	**24**	**137**	**82**	**23**	**79**	**10**	**47**	**18**	**11**	**83**	**55**	**9**
	Grand Total	**59**		**219**		**23**	**89**		**76**			**147**		

Source: Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training.

81. With regard to legislation, it should be noted that article 6, paragraph 4, of the Technical Education and Vocational Training Act No. 23 of 2006 called for the expansion and development of technical education and provision of the installations, equipment and facilities needed to help women and persons with special needs to benefit from this type of education and training. Moreover, article 25, paragraph (d), of the Enrolment Regulation issued on 24 May 2010 stipulated that 40 per cent of the students attending each programme of instruction should consist of persons with special needs.

82. In addition to its collaboration with associations and institutions implementing training programmes for persons with disabilities, with effect from the academic year 2013/14 the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training will be including the subject of "educational role models" in studies in all fields of specialization. This will involve the following:

- Incorporation of concepts relating to persons with special needs (persons with disabilities) in all subjects studied;
- Incorporation of the concepts of equality and equal opportunities, both in theory and practice, especially in the training of instructors and teachers who will be required to apply them.

Child labour

83. The phenomenon of child labour is one of the serious problems facing human societies in many countries of the world, and particularly in the countries of the third world, commonly known as the countries of the South, in most of which this phenomenon has assumed unusual and alarming proportions since the latter part of the last century. It can even be said to constitute a major source of anxiety and a serious challenge not only to the regimes and governments in those countries but also to many international bodies and organizations that have begun to show great concern for this problem and have adopted policies, programmes of action and activities designed to help numerous countries and societies to find solutions and remedies to put an end to child labour.

84. According to the child labour survey conducted in 2010 and published by the Central Statistical Organization, the number of working children in the age group 6–17 years amounted to around 1.6 million (22.3 per cent of the total child population), which was the highest rate on record. The corresponding rates for the 6–11 and 12–14 age groups amounted to 12.2 per cent and 28.5 per cent respectively. The proportion of working children amounted to 11.0 per cent in the 6–11 age group, 24.7 per cent in the 12–14 age group and 24.1 per cent in the older age groups.

85. A large proportion of children working in the Yemeni labour market are engaged in physically demanding occupations in the construction, woodworking, metalworking and agricultural industries while others are working on street pavements as itinerant hawkers or car washers, etc.

86 A total of 8.5 per cent of children in the 6–17 age group combine work with school attendance and the performance of unpaid domestic tasks; 29.6 per cent of all children attend school and perform unpaid domestic tasks; and 10.8 per cent in the 6–11 age group are not economically active.

Percentage distribution of working children by workplace and age

Workplace \ *Age group*	*6–14*	*15–17*	*6–17*	*6–14*	*15–17*
Formal workplaces	24.4	75.6	100.0	0.5	2.4
Shop/workshop	34.7	65.3	100.0	2.7	8.3
Home	62.0	38.0	100.0	6.7	6.8
Street	48.5	51.5	100.0	2.9	5.0
Construction site	31.4	68.6	100.0	0.8	2.8
Farm/garden/field	65.7	34.3	100.0	64.8	55.7
Other	65.2	34.8	100.0	21.6	19.0
Working children	62.2	37.8	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Ministry of Planning, 2011.

Measures taken by the Government to put an end to the phenomenon of child labour

87. In response to the Committee's recommendation urging Yemen to monitor cases of child labour with a view to ensuring the gradual elimination of such labour, particularly in hazardous types of work, and in conformity with the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), both of which have been ratified by Yemen, numerous measures and solutions have been applied to put an end to this increasingly alarming phenomenon.

88. Following the promulgation of the Children's Rights Act No. 45 of 2002, which contained a separate section on the rights of working children, a ministerial ordinance was issued listing the types of work in which the employment of children under 18 years of age was prohibited. Child labour inspectors, officials from the Ministry of the Interior and mosque preachers have received training in this field and awareness of the said ordinance has been promoted through a series of workshops for schoolchildren in the capital, the Children's Parliament, local authorities in the country's governorates, employers and working children themselves.

89. Studies and field research have also been conducted by the Child Labour Unit in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and its branches in the governorates in order to precisely identify the underlying causes of this phenomenon and the problems that it is posing. A database has also been compiled thereon.

90. The capacities of the child labour inspectorate and other staff are being developed and ongoing endeavours are being made to raise public awareness of the gravity of this phenomenon. The Unit has also organized numerous events and activities designed to halt the alarming proliferation of this phenomenon throughout the Republic.

91. Finally, the Yemeni Government, acting in collaboration with the International Labour Organization, has begun the implementation of the first comprehensive countrywide field survey of street children, constituting the largest survey of child labour ever conducted in Yemen, with a view to the establishment of a database illustrating the magnitude of this phenomenon which is reported to have grown considerably in recent years as a result of the deteriorating economic situation of the population and the expanding cycle of poverty in the country. It is hoped that the survey will also help to reduce and put an end to child labour, draw attention to the hazardous nature of the occupations in which children engage and protect them from the worst forms of child labour.

Article 7
Right to just and favourable conditions of work

92. Further to the information that our country has provided in recent years in its reports submitted to treaty bodies concerning the workers' rights for which provision is made in this article, and with reference to the Committee's recommendation that Yemen establish a national minimum wage which would be subject to regular amendments in accordance with the regulations in force in order to secure a decent living for employees and members of their families and ensure that men and women receive equal remuneration for work of equal value, with explicit guarantees to this effect in the Labour Code, we refer the Committee to the information contained in Yemen's eighth report submitted in 2013 to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Article 8
Trade unions and freedom of association

93. For information on this article, we refer the Committee to the previous national reports.

Article 9
Social security and social insurance

Social security

94. The Committee recommended that our country intensify its endeavours and make use of the available resources to increase its budgetary allocations to the social security scheme under which social assistance is provided to enable beneficiaries to enjoy an adequate standard of living. We have the pleasure of reviewing some of those endeavours in the following paragraphs.

95. Under the Transitional Stability and Development Programme, the Yemeni Government has adopted a coordinated national approach to achieve two basic goals: social assistance and economic development, with emphasis on rural areas and the most vulnerable population groups so that needy cases can be assisted by the Social Protection Programme under which the following policies are being pursued:

- Upgrading of the institutional structure of the Social Welfare Fund and the Care and Rehabilitation Fund for Persons with Disabilities;
- Increase in the number of beneficiaries from the cash subsidies and immediate grants and assistance provided by the specialized funds;
- Adoption of the methodology of social rehabilitation of children with disabilities, particularly in rural areas, and early detection of disabilities;
- Encouragement and support for the microcredit programmes of the Social Welfare Fund.

Number of beneficiaries and amount of assistance provided by the Social Welfare Fund during the period 2009–2012

Year	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Number of beneficiaries	1 020 965	1 036 953	1 014 159	1 506 714
Total assistance provided (thousands of rials)	**39 885 997**	**39 774 220**	**40 363 697**	**61 858 224**

Source: Statistical Yearbook, section on social welfare and youth.

96. The cost of the Social Development Fund's investment programmes and projects in the priority social protection sectors (local community infrastructure, capacity-building and development of small enterprises) was estimated at around US$ 1.2 billion.

97. There is a widespread and severe lack of food security in Yemen, which is among the 11 countries of the world with the lowest degree of food security, ranking 74th among the 84 countries listed in the Global Hunger Index. Accordingly, the Government of the Republic of Yemen has an immediate and pressing need for assistance to expand the coverage of the cash assistance programme to households in the greatest need of food security in order to protect them from the rising prices of foodstuffs and the danger of falling into even deeper poverty.

98. The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) has pledged 1.5 million pounds sterling to subsidize the provision of direct cash assistance through the Social Welfare Fund for 10,000 households suffering from extreme poverty and lack of food security.

Social security expenditure during the period 2009–2012

(in millions of rials)

Year	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Expenditure on social security services	47 912	49 789	53 084	535 464
Total GDP	**5 704 956**	**6 374 926**	**6 829 169**	**8 484 599**
Percentage of GDP	0.84	0.78	0.78	6.31

Source: Ministry of Finance, Government Financial Statistical Bulletin, third quarter of 2012.

99. The Government of the Republic of Yemen has reached agreement with the International Monetary Fund on a reform programme and, in fact, has already begun to implement reforms in which the key element is the gradual reduction of subsidies on petroleum products so that all these subsidies can eventually be completely phased out. As a means to offset the burdens imposed by the higher cost of fuel and the volatility in food prices, the Government intends to expand the scope of social assistance cash benefits paid by the Social Welfare Fund in order to protect the most vulnerable households while, at the same time, recognizing the need to carry out commercial and agricultural reforms and other measures in tandem with the supplementary cash assistance in order to ensure a sustainable medium- and long-term improvement in food security.

100. The European Commission, the World Bank and the Kingdom of the Netherlands are supporting programmes for the provision of social protection through the Social Welfare Fund.

101. The number of cases in which assistance was provided rose from 1,020,965 in 2009 to 1,506,714 in 2012.

Social insurance

102. In spite of the prevailing political and economic circumstances, the total index-linked insurance revenue rose to 15,005,857,903.76 rials in 2011, representing an increase of 988,130,470 rials in comparison with the previous year 2010 and a growth rate of 7 per cent.

103. The total net insurance revenue in the year 2011 amounted to 14,929,737,175.41 rials, representing an increase of 960,816,897 rials in comparison with the previous year 2010 and a growth rate of 7 per cent.

104. The total insurance expenditure in the year 2011 amounted to 3,212,886,189.57 rials, representing an increase of 1,061,556,443.88 rials in comparison with the previous year and a growth rate of 49 per cent.

105. The total administrative expenditure in the year 2011 amounted to 1,118,908,537.04 rials, representing an increase of 121,019,402.97 rials in comparison with the previous year and a growth rate of 12 per cent.

106. The number of employers, enterprises and persons working for their own account and enrolled up to the end of 2011 amounted to 15,394, representing an increase of 517 in comparison with the previous year and a growth rate of 3 per cent.

107. The number of persons receiving insurance benefits up to the end of 2011 amounted to 8,687, of whom 6,327 were receiving pensions and 2,360 were receiving indemnity benefits.

108. The number of insurance subscribers enrolled up to the end of 2011 amounted to 348,413, representing an increase of 33,369 in comparison with the figure for December 2010 and a growth rate of 11 per cent, while the number of ongoing subscribers amounted to 129,434, representing a decrease of 7 per cent in comparison with the previous year as a result of several factors, including:

- The political crisis that the country experienced in 2011, during which employers and companies laid off many of their workers;
- Loss of some subscribers reaching pensionable age or receiving lump-sum entitlements as in the case of foreigners leaving the country on termination of their employment contracts, particularly in petroleum-related projects and companies;
- Resignation of subscribers and emigration of Yemenis seeking employment abroad;
- Subjection of public-sector contractual personnel to the provisions of Act No. 25 of 1991.

Article 10
Family formation and protection of mothers and children

109. With regard to information on the issues raised by the Committee in its recommendations concerning legislative harmonization to ensure gender equality in marital affairs, in addition to the measures that Yemen has taken to combat female genital mutilation, domestic violence, child marriage and forced marriage, we wish to refer the Committee to Yemen's eighth report submitted in 2013 under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Endeavours to combat trafficking in persons

110. Further to the information and clarifications provided in Yemen's eighth report submitted in 2013 under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, with regard to the Committee's recommendations concerning the need to strengthen our country's regulations on the prevention of crimes of trafficking in persons, punishment of their perpetrators and rehabilitation of their victims, we wish to refer to a number of measures that the Yemeni Government has taken in this connection. Since the beginning of 2012, the Ministry of Human Rights has paid special attention to the issue of trafficking in persons for which insufficient concern had previously been shown even though it constitutes a dangerous phenomenon that could lead to the commission of violations against various categories of persons, with serious social consequences, unless it is addressed and steps are taken to put an end to it. The principal endeavours that the Ministry has made in this regard can be summarized as follows:

- On 7 April 2012, the Minister for Human Rights ordered the formation of a technical working group to examine and assess this phenomenon and propose appropriate solutions to tackle it at the national level. She also ordered the establishment, within the administrative structure of the Ministry of Human Rights, of a special unit to combat trafficking in persons;
- Government officials participated in a number of forums organized by international organizations concerned with this phenomenon and the Ministry of Human Rights followed up on the recommendations made during those forums by securing the adoption in the Council of Ministers of a proposal to establish a committee, consisting of national stakeholders, to combat trafficking in persons;
- A training programme on the phenomenon of trafficking in persons, held in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration during the period 1–2 July 2012, was attended by the officials concerned in the Ministry of Human Rights and in a number of other government bodies and civil society organizations;
- The Ministry of Human Rights drafted a proposal for the formation of a National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons on the basis of which the Council of Ministers issued its Decision No. 46 of 2012 establishing that body under the chairmanship of H.E. the Minister of Human Rights and including among its members representatives of the governmental and non-governmental bodies seeking to combat that phenomenon. The Committee constitutes the national institutional framework for policymaking and the establishment of national mechanisms for the prevention and punishment of crimes of trafficking in persons and the formulation of programmes for the protection and rehabilitation of their victims. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Committee is responsible for the preparation of a national strategy to combat trafficking in persons, as well as a national bill of law on the prevention of trafficking in persons, and the performance of a number of other related functions and assignments;
- A specialized national workshop for the discussion of issues involving crimes of trafficking in persons was organized within the framework of the First National Conference on Human Rights which was held during the period 9–10 December 2012 and attended by members of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons together with a large number of activists and persons interested in this issue from all the groups concerned in all the Republic's governorates.

111. By the time this report was prepared and submitted to the Committee, the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons had taken several measures and completed a number of activities including, in particular, its adoption of a bill of law on trafficking in persons which was drawn up with the help of international experts from Arab countries and

benefited from the experience of a number of States in this field. The bill was submitted to a national workshop attended by representatives of various governmental and non-governmental bodies concerned and was also posted on government websites so that the workshop participants and the public could comment thereon. All their comments were taken into account in the final text of the bill, which was submitted for completion of the procedures for its promulgation and entry into force at the earliest possible date. The Committee is currently drafting a national strategy to combat trafficking in persons.

Article 11
Right to an adequate standard of living and food security

Development and endeavours to combat poverty

112. Yemen is among the world's poorest countries and is faced with a high rate of population growth accompanied by sluggish economic development. Its population size is expected to double within 15 years, reaching 50 million in 2030, thereby putting severe pressure on economic resources, services and employment opportunities, etc. Consequently, there is a need to find effective solutions to the explosive population growth rate by intensifying family planning programmes with all their awareness-raising and medical components.

113. Poverty in Yemen is not of a transient nature. It is linked to the socioeconomic structure of the State and is attributable to numerous natural, human, local, regional and international factors the combination of which has created an environment conducive to poverty. Yemen experienced a considerable increase in poverty during the last two decades and its declining petroleum revenues, shortage of water resources, low standards of public health and education services and widespread poverty, particularly in rural areas, constitute the main obstacles impeding economic development. Mismanagement and the unstable security situation also pose serious challenges to the country's future socioeconomic development.

114. In addition, Yemen is suffering from an imbalanced population distribution among its 21 governorates and their villages numbering around 41,800 since 24 per cent of the population live in urban areas and 74 per cent in settlements of less than 5,000 persons, which is greatly undermining the country's ability to deliver basic education, training and health services and implement development projects.

115. More than 52 per cent of Yemen's population, representing more than 12 million out of the country's estimated total population of 24 million, are now suffering from poverty, as compared with the figure of 39 per cent prior to the outbreak of the crisis in the early part of 2011.

116. One of the main problems associated with poverty is the lack of food security. Malnutrition rates are high, particularly among children, and economic activity in general, and especially in the private sector, has not improved to an extent sufficient to have an impact on unemployment rates and poverty levels.

117. The aim of the Transitional Stability and Development Programme is to increase the gross domestic product (GDP) by 4.5 per cent in order to help to improve the population's standard of living.

118. There was a notable increase in the gross national income (GNI) per capita, which rose from 242,894 rials in 2009 to 270,657 rials in 2010 but subsequently declined to 256,580 rials as a result of the events that affected the Yemeni economy in the early part of 2011 and led to a decrease in purchasing power due to rising prices and job losses. However, GNI per capita once again rose to 270,567 rials in 2012.

119. In terms of United States dollars, we find that GNI per capita rose from $1,197 in 2009 to $1,263 in 2012.

120. The statistics compiled in the light of the results of the household budget survey conducted in 2006 showed an improvement in per capita income insofar as the total monthly income per household supported by a male breadwinner amounted to around 76,242 rials (9,867 rials per capita) while the income per household supported by a female breadwinner amounted to around 42,746 rials (8,766 rials per capita).

GNP per capita during the period 2009–2011

Item	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
GNP at market prices (in millions of rials)	5 553 524	6 467 728	6 237 962	6 784 191
Average US$ exchange rate	202.85	219.59	213.8	214.35
Average per capita				
In rials	242 894	274 242	256 580	270 657
In dollars	1 197	1 249	1 200	1 263

Source: Ministry of Planning.

Measures taken by the Government in the agricultural sector

121. These measures are illustrated by the following:

- Expansion of grain cultivation and improvement of livestock productivity;
- Introduction of modern rain-fed agricultural techniques consistent with traditional practices;
- More efficient use of irrigation water through the introduction of appropriate irrigation systems and techniques;
- Construction of more water barrages and small dams and harvesting of rainwater;
- Promotion of the role of women in food security and poverty alleviation in rural areas;
- Encouragement and development of the agricultural cooperative movement and agricultural initiatives;
- Expansion of the role played by the Fund for the Promotion of Agricultural and Fishery Production in agricultural financing.

Measures taken by the Government, within the framework of its Transitional Stability and Development Programme, in the water sector

122. These measures are illustrated by the following:

- Enhancement of the ability of the Ministry of Water and Environment and the National Water Resources Authority to implement the Water Act;
- Improvement and development of the standard of water basin recording and management and prioritization of water use in accordance with the basin management plan;
- Formulation of urgent solutions to help to ensure the supply of drinking water in the governorates of Ta'izz, Ibb and the capital Sana'a;

- Increased coverage by water and sanitation services in urban and rural areas;
- Reconstruction and rehabilitation of the infrastructure and public and private utilities damaged during the events that took place in Yemen in recent years, with accordance of priority to education and health services, roads, electricity supply, water networks and urban streets.

Article 12
Health

Current health situation in Yemen

123. Health problems in Yemen were aggravated by the disorder that prevailed during the recent events and the country is on the verge of a humanitarian disaster due to the proliferation of infectious diseases such as measles, pulmonary tuberculosis, cholera, viral hepatitis and poliomyelitis. The following indicators are noteworthy in this regard:

- In 2010, average life expectancy at birth amounted to 63 years (less than the global average of 69.3 years);
- The mortality rate is 17.7 per cent higher among the rural than among the urban population;
- The high mortality rate in Yemen is attributable to several factors such as low birthweight and widespread malnutrition;
- The morbidity rate reported in health facilities in Yemen increased by 33 per cent during the period 2003–2009 due to the high incidence of contagious and non-contagious diseases;
- In 2009, the incidence of road traffic injuries rose to 1,321 cases per 100,000 of the population, which is one of the highest rates in the world;
- Infectious and maternal diseases have proliferated due to the conditions in which childbirth takes place and the high proportion of mothers deprived of health services;
- The maternal mortality rate in Yemen remains among the highest recorded global rates;
- The likelihood of death from disease or injury is 110 per cent higher among children than among adults in the 15–59 age group;
- A high percentage of children are born with a low birthweight (under 2,500 grams) or are afflicted with stunted growth, emaciation or moderate or severe underweight;
- The data show a decrease in the incidence of malaria from 1,263 cases per 100,000 persons in 1990 to 600 cases in 2009 and the mortality rate from this disease likewise declined from 9 per cent to 6 per cent during the period 2000–2009. The tuberculosis detection rate rose from 28 per cent to 76 per cent during the period 1990–2010 and the incidence of this disease declined from 137 to 49 cases per 100,000 of the population during the same period.

Reduction in the infant mortality rate

124. Yemen, which has more than 4,589,280 children under 5 years of age, has succeeded in considerably reducing mortality rates among infants and children under that age. The infant mortality rate dropped from 90 per thousand live births in 1990 to 57 per thousand in 2010 and the mortality rate among children under 5 years of age likewise fell during the

same period from 128 to 77 per thousand live births, representing a decline of 2.5 per cent. The crude birth rate also dropped from 37.9 live births per thousand of the population in 2005 to 35.9 in 2010 and is expected to decline further to 27.7 during the period 2020–2025.

125. Immunization coverage in Yemen has improved during the last decade, reaching a rate of around 100 per cent for poliomyelitis vaccine among all income groups and with no great difference between rural and urban areas or between males and females. The average national coverage of measles vaccine amounts to 80 per cent and, therefore, there appears to be a long and hard road ahead for Yemen to achieve the Millennium Goals in this regard.

126. Several poliomyelitis immunization campaigns have recently been carried out. The latest was the national house-to-house poliomyelitis immunization campaign conducted under the expanded national immunization programme, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and UNICEF, during the period 11–13 June 2013.

Life expectancy at birth during the period 2005–2025

Period	*Males*	*Females*	*Overall*
2005–2010	61.1	62.9	62
2010–2015	62.1	63.9	63
2015–2020	63.1	65.0	64
2020–2025	64.1	65.9	65

Source: Population projections in the Republic of Yemen, 2005–2025.

Improvement in maternal health

127. The maternal mortality rate was reduced from 540 cases per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 210 cases in 2010. In spite of the progress that has been made, however, the current maternal mortality rate and the data on maternal care indicate that Yemen is not on the right path to achievement of the maternal health goals. The high maternal mortality rate is closely linked to the quality of ante- and perinatal health care and the extent of access to qualified health personnel and family planning and sexual and reproductive health services.

128. The proportion of expectant mothers receiving antenatal care increased from 26 per cent to 47 per cent during the period 1990–2005 and the proportion of deliveries under specialist health supervision likewise increased from 16 per cent in 1990 to 36 per cent in 2005. The proportion of women in the 15–49 age group using means of contraception rose from 10 per cent in 1990 to 28 per cent in 2005 and the proportion of women whose needs in regard to family planning services had not been met declined from 39 per cent to 24 per cent during the period 1995–2005. The female mortality risk factors include early marriage and pregnancy during adolescence and, in this connection, the fertility rate among female adolescents during the period 1995–2010 declined from 109 to 74 births per thousand women in the 15–19 age group.

Female employment in the health sector

129. For information and statistics relevant to the Committee's recommendation to increase the number of jobs held by women in the health sector, and particularly in nursing, reference can be made to Yemen's eighth report submitted in May 2013 under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Measures taken by the Government to improve physical and mental health

130. The measures taken in this regard are illustrated by the following:

- Reduction in the incidence of endemic and pandemic diseases;
- Increase in the rates of immunization against diseases;
- Reduction in malnutrition rates;
- More extensive coverage by reproductive health and family planning services;
- Provision of a list of basic medicines in health facilities;
- Health and population awareness raising;
- Improvement of emergency services, including basic services, medical camps, pharmaceuticals and medical requisites, with emphasis on priority areas;
- Action to prevent and control infectious diseases and health epidemics;
- Reduction in the incidence of acute malnutrition;
- Improvement of reproductive and primary health-care services in needy areas;
- Improvement of emergency services in the main hospitals;
- Satisfaction of hospital equipment needs;
- Construction and rehabilitation of specialized health centres;
- Institutional improvements in the health system through training and further training;
- Restructuring and functional reclassification of facilities and personnel;
- Improvement of health information, monitoring and evaluation systems and quality control of services;
- Implementation of preparatory procedures for the introduction of the health insurance scheme;
- Encouragement of breastfeeding and appropriate supplementary nutrition;
- Prevention of anaemia (iron deficiency) through the iron-fortification of flour;
- Saving of lives through vitamin supplements (the Ministry of Health has adopted protocols to treat malnutrition, with support from UNICEF, through the implementation of outpatient therapeutic programmes (OTPs), the establishment of therapeutic feeding centres (TFCs) for the treatment of detected cases of acute malnutrition with or without complications, and the supplementary feeding programme (SFP) for the treatment of moderate malnutrition at health centres and hospitals).

Weak points in health policies

131. The weak points in health policies consist in the following:

- The low level of government spending, as a percentage of GDP, on the health sector as a whole and its decline from 1.9 per cent in 2004 to 1.7 per cent in 2010;
- Most of the programmes funded by donor countries and international organizations have been almost fully halted or deferred until conditions stabilize. This has contributed to a serious deterioration in the health situation and the proliferation of

contagious diseases in the country, particularly since national funding is totally insufficient;

- Inefficiency of the internal mechanisms for government spending on the health sector in which current expenditure dominates to the detriment of investment expenditure which accounts for only a very small proportion (26.4 per cent) of the total health budget in real terms;
- Distribution of material and human inputs in a manner inconsistent with the size of the population and its health needs in the various governorates;
- Disparity between rural and urban areas in regard to the coverage rates of services.

Article 13
Education

Primary and secondary education

132. The National Strategy for the Development of Basic Education 2003–2015 and the overall Strategic Programme contain numerous components embodying the concepts of equality and non-discrimination, particularly in regard to enrolment and awareness-raising, and programmes have been designed for children with special needs and children from poor families in rural and urban areas. The Ministry of Education is also helping to implement a number of education programmes for refugee children in collaboration with the organizations and bodies concerned. The Strategic Programme consists of plans for the reform and improvement of basic education and the determination and development of strategic performance therein, as well as a national strategy for the development of secondary education.

133. We wish to draw the Committee's attention to the circumstances with which Yemen has been faced in recent years and the impact that they have had on the education process. In fact, the education sector as a whole has been subjected to disruptions and shutdowns since 2011 as a result of the strikes and protests by teaching staff demanding an improvement in their living conditions, in addition to the armed conflicts in various parts of Yemen during which schools and universities have been targeted and occupied. However, in keeping with the Committee's recommendation, continued endeavours have been made to ensure universal primary education in Yemen and remedy the low enrolment rates and gender gap in basic and secondary education. In this connection, we are submitting the following statistics and indicators for the Committee's information:

- The dropout rate is notably higher among females than among males, amounting to 67.9 per cent as compared with 53.2 per cent for males. In the academic year 2010/11, there were 12,376 basic education schools (785 for males, 625 for females and 10,966 co-educational) in the government and private sectors;
- In the academic year 2010/11, there were 3,732 schools (363 for males, 435 for females and 2,732 co-educational) providing both basic and secondary education in the two sectors;
- In the academic year 2010/11, there were 331 secondary schools (134 for males, 50 for females and 147 co-educational);
- In the academic year 2010/11, the number of students enrolled in basic education schools amounted to 4,656,390 (2,667,272 males and 1,989,118 females) and the number enrolled in secondary education schools amounted to 615,591 (382,708 males and 232,883 females).

Education of children with disabilities

134. The Committee recommended, inter alia, that Yemen take a number of measures to ensure educational coverage of children with disabilities through the obligatory training of all teachers (including specialized instructors), availability of assistive devices and classroom support, provision of educational curricula and materials as well as the facilities needed to overcome obstacles impeding access to school premises and buildings, and the teaching of sign language. In this connection, we wish to inform the Committee as follows.

135. The introduction of the inclusive education (inclusive schools) programme in the education sector confirmed our country's intention to fulfil the commitments that it undertook on signing the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991 since inclusive education is closely related to the principles advocated in that Convention. Although the inclusive education programme has been applied as a component of the education sector only for a relatively short period of 15 years (1998–2013), the 391 inclusive schools that have been established in 18 governorates have been highly successful in providing education services for children with special needs.

136. The indicators and statistics on education in the Republic of Yemen during the academic year 2010/11 show that the secondary education system had absorbed 14,558 persons with disabilities.

Principal measures taken to ensure the inclusive education of children with disabilities

137. The measures taken in this regard are illustrated by the following:

- Establishment of a database on schools catering for children in this category;
- Integration of children with motor, intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities and visual impairments;
- The reading, writing and activity textbooks prepared for students with hearing impairments in the age group 4–6 years and the first grade of basic education were approved by the Higher Committee on Curricula for 2003/04;
- A number of male and female teachers have been trained to teach Braille to blind students and sociologists have been trained in the skills needed to cater for children with special needs;
- A number of persons have been trained to deal with learning difficulties and a training manual has been compiled to this end.

Indicators of achievement in the field of inclusive education

138. The following indicators give an idea of the achievements made in this field:

- With regard to training, 180 specialists trained 2,440 persons in Aden, Lahij and Abyan in learning difficulties, speech therapy, integration and resource rooms;
- 3,000 male and female teachers received training in the concept of integration;
- 200 schools were upgraded to make them more consistent with the requirements of persons with special needs and a further 150 resource rooms were established;
- An agreement was signed with the Social Development Fund to support inclusive education schools in the governorate of Shabwah.

Policies and programmes to improve the education situation in Yemen

139. These policies and programmes are illustrated by the following:

- Formulation of effective solutions for children deprived of basic education, especially in the case of girls in rural areas;
- More effective application of the principles of compulsory basic education and reduction of failure and dropout rates therein;
- Establishment of criteria for the appointment of competent and specialized senior administrative and supervisory staff in educational institutions;
- Application of quality criteria at all stages and in all types of education;
- Improvement and ongoing development and evaluation of academic curricula and teaching methods;
- Promotion of more active partnership between the State, civil society and the private sector;
- Provision of school buildings, furniture and equipment in keeping with the constantly increasing number of students;
- Establishment of colleges offering the specialized courses required to meet the needs of the local and regional labour markets.

Gender disparity in employment in the education sector

140. For information concerning the measures taken by the Yemeni Government to promote gender equality in employment in the education sector and remedy gender-based disparities in the composition of the teaching staff, particularly in rural areas, as recommended by the Committee, and in order to provide adequate financial support to change the behavioural patterns of guardians and traditional domestic labour practices, reference can be made to Yemen's eighth report submitted in May 2013 under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Eradication of illiteracy

141. In this connection, as requested by the Committee in its recommendations, we have pleasure in presenting the information available on the results achieved by Yemen during its ongoing endeavours to eliminate illiteracy and its causes through active implementation, monitoring, evaluation and funding of the Adult Education and Eradication of Illiteracy Strategy.

142. The literacy programmes in all the governorates have been expanded and 1,328 male and female members of teaching staffs benefited from training courses to develop their skills during the period 2005–2007. However, this figure falls short of the national strategic goals for adult education and eradication of illiteracy to which we referred in our second periodic report and which called for the training of 30,000 persons through enrolment in basic and female training programmes during the period 2006–2010.

143. In the academic year 2007/08, the number of literacy centres amounted to 3,356 in which 9,579 male and female employees were working and a total of 166,910 male and female students of all ages were enrolled in the literacy programmes. During the same year, the number of male and female students in the age group 10–20 years enrolled in the two types of alphabetic literacy (reading and writing) programmes and the basic vocational and craft training centres amounted to 51,628, representing 30 per cent of the total enrolments in all age groups and 35 per cent of the total number of illiterate persons.

144. According to the illiteracy rate indicators for the year 2009/10, the illiteracy rate stood at 62.1 cent of the total population and was estimated at 70.2 per cent among females

and 29.8 per cent among males. A total of 46.4 per cent of the population in the age group 15 years and above were illiterate. This implies that the proportion of the population in that age group who were able to read and write amounted to no more than 53.6 per cent (of whom about 37.9 per cent were females).

Challenges and fundamental problems

145. The challenges and fundamental problems can be summarized as follows:

- The disparity in educational enrolment between males and females and between urban and rural areas and the high rate of population growth lead to increased demand for education which the State is unable to meet due to its lack of material resources;
- The students enrolled do not receive sufficient good-quality educational instruction. The gender gap in the number of students enrolled is largely due to the small number of females on the school teaching staff and the inadequate number of girls' schools, especially in rural areas;
- Social problems such as early marriage, poverty and the customs and traditions underlying society's short-sighted view that girls' education is not important.

Statistics on higher education

146. In 2010, there were 8 government universities in 8 Yemeni governorates, in addition to 16 private universities. The number of students enrolled in the government universities throughout the Republic amounted to 205,691 of whom 140,625 (68.37 per cent) were males and 65,066 (31.63 per cent) females and the number enrolled in the private universities amounted to 63,364 of whom 47,472 (74.92 per cent) were males and 15,892 (28.08 per cent) were females.

147. Seven of the government universities were offering higher studies in faculties of education, arts, commerce, economics, political science, sharia and law, languages and information and communications technology and there was also a centre for demographic studies and a centre for hydrological and environmental studies. The total number of students enrolled in all the universities amounted to 2,285 of whom 1,628 were males and 657 were females.

Higher educational studies for persons with disabilities

148. According to reports compiled in 2010, the total number of students with disabilities receiving higher education in 2009 amounted to 2,481 of whom 2,333 were studying for a post-secondary higher diploma, 36 for a master's degree and 112 for a doctorate. These figures are likely to increase since a large number of local and foreign bursaries were awarded in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 and most of the students with disabilities who have completed their secondary education enrol in Government-run and private universities.

149. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research dispatches a number of blind students and students with motor disabilities to study abroad, after which they return to work as members of university teaching staff and some of these persons with motor disabilities exercise their functions in a normal manner.

Shortcomings in the education services provided for persons with disabilities

150. The shortcomings in these services are illustrated by the following:

- The infrastructure of the Government-run and private universities makes no provision for the environmental and structural amenities needed to facilitate the free and dignified movement of persons with disabilities;
- No procedural facilities are provided to enable students to overcome the difficulties resulting from their disabilities by resorting to alternative means to receive an education in a fair manner;
- Persons with disabilities are not assigned a quota of places in educational institutions as is the case in the Civil Service where 5 per cent of the posts in all functional grades are allocated by law to persons with disabilities. In this connection, it is noteworthy that the legally mandatory exemption of disabled persons from payment of university fees, as recommended by the Committee in its observations on our country's second periodic report, has not been implemented.

Role of international assistance in the full realization of the rights enunciated in the Covenant

151. The total pledges made during the donors' conferences held in Riyadh and New York up to September 2012 amounted to US$ 7.9 billion to support the Stability and Development Programme during the transitional phase 2012–2014.

152. The total amounts earmarked for the medium-term programme priorities amounted to US$ 8.443 billion with the following sectoral distribution:

(a) The infrastructural sectors ranked highest with an amount of US$ 2.8 billion covering 36.8 per cent of the programme's total financial shortfall;

(b) The natural resources sector accounted for 26.1 per cent of the total financial shortfall, followed by the production sectors (13 per cent), the social security network (13.2 per cent), the public administration sectors (5 per cent) and, finally, sound governance (around 3.9 per cent).

Pledges for the priorities of the Transitional Stability and Development Programme

(in millions of dollars)

Priorities	*Cost*	*Shortfall*	*Amount pledged*	*Shortfall*
Short-term priorities of the "urgent programme"	4 757	4 260	3 493	82%
Medium-term transitional programme	12 463	7 653	4 384	57%
Total	**17 220**	**11 913**	**7 877**	**66%**

Source: Transitional Stability and Development Programme, September 2012.

Medium-term economic recovery programme

(in millions of dollars)

Sector	*Projects under way*	*Governmental*	*Foreign*	*Shortfall*	***Total***
Production	926	245	42	1 148	**1 435**
Infrastructure	12 632	2 050	330	2 812	**5 192**
Human resources development	1 960	527	163	1 996	**2 686**
Sound governance	369	141	-	298	**438**
Public administration	902	332	-	387	**719**
Social security network	1 078	459	520	1 012	**1 992**
Total	**17 867**	**3 754**	**1 055**	**7 653**	**12 462**

Source: Transitional Stability and Development Programme, September 2012.

Annexes

Annex 1

Sources of reference

- Statistical Yearbook, 2011, Central Statistical Organization, Ministry of Planning;
- Plans and reports of the working groups established by the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference;
- Reports and decisions of the Council of Ministers;
- Eighth report of the Republic of Yemen submitted under the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 2013;
- Human development indicators in Yemen, 2011;
- National report of the Republic of Yemen on sustainable development submitted to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 2012;
- Combined seventeenth and eighteenth periodic reports of Yemen submitted under the provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- Annual report of the Yemeni National Union of the Marginalized dated 25 December 2011;
- Document containing the demands of marginalized persons submitted to the National Dialogue Conference (constitutional provisions);
- Yemen's official comments on reports of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights during the period 2011–2012;
- National report of the Republic of Yemen presented at the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014.

Annex 2

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